

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-30

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P 170920Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4771

USLO PEKING PRIORITY

AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 4799

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA. 2.)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, CH, UR, PK

SUBJECT: CHINESE VICE PREMIER ON SOVIET THREAT

1. OUR CHINA WATCHERS MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE FOLLOWING: LAST NIGHT AT SOCIAL OCCASION I HAD A FEW MINUTES ALONE WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY AGAH SHAHI ABOUT BHUTTO'S RECENT TRIP TO PEKING. MOST INTERESTING THING HE TOLD ME WAS ABOUT BRIEFING REMARKS BY TENG HSIAO-PING TO PAKS. HE DESCRIBED TENG AS BRUSQUE AND STRAIGHT TO THE POINT FOR A CHINESE.

2. AFTER OPENING HIS REMARKS WITH REFERENCE TO FACT THAT THERE WERE MANY TROUBLES UNDER THE HEAVENS IN THIS WORLD, TENG STRESSED ONE MAIN POINT. HE REPORTEDLY POOH-POOHED IDEA OF THREAT FROM THE SOVIETS ALONG THE CHINESE BORDER OR THE POSSIBILITY OF A SOVIET PREEMPTIVE NUCLEAR ATTACK. HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE SOVIETS WANTED THIS THEME TO BE BELIEVED IN THE WEST, AND THAT AMERICAN JOURNALISTS WERE UNWITTINGLY ASSISTING THEM IN MAKING THIS THREAT SOUND REAL. HE APPARENTLY WENT INTO SOME DETAIL TO PROVE HIS POINT BY A DESCRIPTION OF SOVIET MILITARY STRENGTHS AND DEPLOYMENT WHICH HE SAID DISPROVED

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THAT THE MAIN CONCERN OF THE SOVIET UNION WAS CHINA.

ALL THIS, HE SAID, WAS A FEINT ON THE PART OF THE
SOVIET UNION TO LULL THE WEST INTO COMPLACENCY, AND TO
CONCEAL THAT THEIR MAIN TARGET REMAINED, AS ALWAYS, THE
WEST.

3. THIS MAY BE OLD STUFF TO YOU, BUT IT SURPRISED ME THAT
TENG HSIAO-PING WOULD DOWNGRADE THE THREAT OF THE SOVIET
UNION AS REGARDS CHINA TO THIS EXTENT WITH THE PAKS, UNLESS
HE DID IT WITH THE THOUGHT THAT WE AND OTHERS IN THE WEST
MIGHT GET THE MESSAGE THROUGH THEM.
BYROADE

SECRET

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